

## DROVER TRIALS

RECENTLY the prototype Drover was flown to Melbourne by Brian Walker, test pilot for de Havilland Aircraft Pty., Ltd., for flight trials by the Australian Department of Civil Aviation. The flight of 460 miles was made at a true air speed of 140 m.p.h., and fuel consumption was approximately 22 gallons per hour. Already the flight trials are well under way and preliminary reports indicate very satisfactory results. During makers' trials the rate of climb at sea level on one engine was found to be 240 feet per minute (I.C.A.N. atmosphere). The second prototype is now nearly completed and it is expected that production will start early next year.

## NAVIGATION EXHIBITION

AN exhibition, "Navigation Through the Ages," organized by the Royal Geographical Society and the Institute of Navigation, was opened by H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh, on December 17th. Among the exhibits on loan from the National Maritime Museum, the Science Museum and other museums, societies and Government organizations are historic and modern instruments, charts and maps of great explorers, and modern radar aids. The exhibition is held at the Royal Geographical Society, Exhibition Road, S.W.7, and is open to the public on weekdays from 10.30 a.m. to 6 p.m., 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday, but will close on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Sundays.

## SABENA ACCIDENT REPORT

THE Chief Inspector of Accidents has reported on the crash involving the Sabena Douglas DC-3 OO-AWH at London Airport on March 2nd, 1948. The aircraft left Evère Airport, Brussels, at 1940 hours on a scheduled flight to London Airport and normal radio communication was maintained throughout with Brussels, Uxbridge and London Airport. Permission was granted by Uxbridge at 2026 hours for G.C.A. facilities to be used and at 2048 London Airport informed the aircraft that visibility was 200 yards and that conditions were calm. After that the London Director of the G.C.A. passed information on the course to steer, barometric pressure and that sodium lights covered the first 200 yards of the runway. A series of courses and heights to fly were then passed which placed the aircraft in position for a talk-down, and the duty talk-down controller accepted the aircraft for the final approach for landing on runway QDM 100 deg at a range of 7 miles and height of 700 feet. At that time the aircraft was 500 feet to the left of the centre line of the runway and azimuth corrections were passed. Distance of the aircraft from the touch-down point were given at each quarter-mile from seven miles to two miles and each quarter-mile from two miles to quarter mile. During the greater part of the approach the pilot was informed of his height relative to the glide path and at a quarter of a mile from touch down he was 60 feet above. At a range of approximately 300 yards the pilot was told to look ahead and land, that range of 300 yards being coincident with the beginning of the runway. In azimuth the aircraft was 80 feet to the right of the centre line of the runway and that track had been steadily maintained from a distance of three-quarters of a mile. Two witnesses saw the aircraft flying over the runway at height of about 40 feet, after which it was seen to turn left with its landing lights on and to lose height rapidly until it struck the ground. The Inspector concludes that after a satisfactory G.C.A. approach the aircraft was flying a few feet above the runway when the last few sodium lights were passed. The pilot had anticipated making a normal landing but his visual contact was impaired by the sudden change of lighting. While endeavouring to re-establish visual contact the aircraft was allowed to climb, and the pilot switched on the landing lights, the glare from which made visual contact even more difficult. During those few moments the aircraft veered to the left and stalled from a height of about 50 feet. In the opinion of the Chief Inspector the accident was due to a misjudgment on the part of the pilot when trying to land at night in conditions of very poor visibility.

## S.E. ASIA MEETING

DELEGATES to the South-East Asia Regional Meeting of I.C.A.O. in New Delhi, as reported in *Flight*, November 25th and December 15th, are considering recommendations made by the Search and Rescue Committee to improve the existing rescue facilities in the region. They have recommended helicopters to aid search and rescue work in certain areas, including four in India; the setting up of two further centres for rescue co-ordination, and various measures for training the marine and air crews engaged on the operations. Delegates are also considering safety measures to improve airfields in the S.E. area and the establishment of 15 Flight Information Regions, two of which would be new and located at Bangkok and Canton. Recommendations have been made to bring procedures in the control of aircraft into line with other I.C.A.O. regions and improve the operational safety of the region.

## BERLIN SERVICE CANCELLED

AS a temporary measure British European Airways has cancelled services between Berlin, Hamburg and London. Bookings up to Christmas are understood to be heavy, but passengers will be accommodated on R.A.F. Transport Command aircraft. Although it is not officially confirmed, the decision has been taken as a result of regulations introduced by the R.A.F. to regulate the air traffic into the Berlin area. All aircraft operating on the air lift are required to home on to a Eureka beacon and position themselves within only a small margin of a stated time. B.E.A. Vikings do not carry Rebecca and, in consequence, find it difficult to comply with the regulations to fit into the air traffic pattern. It is possible that B.E.A. may charter Dakotas, equipped with Rebecca, from B.O.A.C. and resume the services into Berlin.

## BREVITIES

A NEW runway measuring 2,000 yards was opened at Fuhlsbüttel, Hamburg, on December 15th. It is the first to be constructed for civil aviation in Germany since the war, and is equipped with a central line of lights for night landing.

It is understood from New Zealand that Tasman Empire Airways may be dissolved by the withdrawal of the U.K. from the partnership, and by the flying of separate services by the Australian and New Zealand Governments. It is known that A.N.A. is keen to operate a service but permission has not yet been granted by the New Zealand Government.

The American Civil Aeronautics Board has ordered all U.S. domestic airlines to carry a flight engineer in addition to two pilots on all aircraft certificated for more than 80,000 lb take-off weight. Airlines estimate that the new regulations will cost some £5,000,000 in the first year with recurring costs amounting to about £2,500,000 in subsequent years.

S. Instone & Co., Ltd., have disposed of their interest in Instone Airlines 1946 (Malta), Ltd., to Maltese buyers. In consequence of this the company are no longer interested in Air Malta, Ltd., but Instone Lines, Ltd., continue to act as the Maltese airlines' general agents in the U.K.

The British Air Line Pilots' Association held their annual get-together at the Savoy Hotel on December 15th. The guests included representatives from every sphere in aviation in the U.K., and representatives of pilots' associations overseas. There were two from Canada, one from Australia, and one each from Central Africa and Holland. The secretary of the Irish Air Line Pilots' Association was also present.

Regular air services between Bangkok and Jogjakarta, capital of the Indonesian Republic, are shortly to be started by Pacific Overseas Airlines, a Siamese company. The Nether-

